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**SB-707 Medi-Cal: Denti-Cal Advisory Group.** (2017-2018)

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CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE— 2017–2018 REGULAR SESSION

**SENATE BILL**

**NO. 707**

**Introduced by Senator Cannella  
(Coauthor: Assembly Member Mayes)**

**February 17, 2017**

An act to add and repeal Section 14005.274 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to Medi-Cal.

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

SB 707, Cannella. Medi-Cal: Denti-Cal Advisory Group.

Existing law establishes the Medi-Cal program, administered by the State Department of Health Care Services, under which basic health care services are provided to qualified low-income persons. The Medi-Cal program is, in part, governed and funded by federal Medicaid program provisions. Existing law provides coverage for certain dental services, as specified, to Medi-Cal beneficiaries through either the Medi-Cal fee-for-service delivery system, which is also referred to as Denti-Cal, or the Medi-Cal dental managed care delivery system. Existing law requires the department to report to the Legislature, by October 1, 2017, on progress towards the goal of raising the Denti-Cal utilization rate among eligible child beneficiaries to 60% or greater and identify a date by which the department projects this utilization goal will be met.

This bill, until January 1, 2023, would establish the Medi-Cal Dental Advisory Group in the department, as specified, for the purpose of studying the structure, policies, and priorities of the Medi-Cal dental fee-for-service program and the Medi-Cal dental managed care program with the goal of increasing dental utilization rates among eligible beneficiaries, as specified, and improving the oral health of the Medi-Cal eligible population, providing assistance and advice to the department, the Legislature, and the Governor to ensure that the Denti-Cal program is based on sound clinical evidence and scientific evidence, and studying and evaluating how the Medi-Cal dental fee-for-service and the Medi-Cal dental managed care program policies align with and support the implementation of the state oral health plan. The bill would prohibit the advisory group from taking a position on

legislation. The bill would require the advisory group to report any of its findings to the Legislature, at least annually, and would require the department to post those findings on its Internet Web site. The bill would make related legislative findings and declarations.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

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## THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

### **SECTION 1.** (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(1) Denti-Cal is the Medi-Cal dental fee-for-service health care component program that was established soon after the 1966 creation of the Medi-Cal program. Medi-Cal dental managed care is a delivery model that also provides medically necessary dental services to eligible Medi-Cal beneficiaries.

(2) According to an audit conducted by the California State Auditor in 2014, only 43.9 percent of children enrolled in the Denti-Cal program had seen a dentist in the previous year—a utilization rate that was the 12th worst among states that submitted data to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Eleven California counties had no Denti-Cal providers or no providers willing to accept new child patients covered by Denti-Cal.

(3) Thirteen million or more Medi-Cal beneficiaries need the State Department of Health Care Services and dental care fee-for-service providers and dental managed care contractors to improve their relationships.

(4) In any sector, public or private, good relationships are built on a foundation of good customer service.

(b) Therefore, the Legislature establishes pursuant to this act an evidence-based advisory group to guide Medi-Cal dental program priorities, to study policy decisions, and to increase annual dental utilization rates among children in the state to 60 percent or greater, as is the case in approximately 20 percent of states.

### **SEC. 2.** Section 14005.274 is added to the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

**14005.274.** (a) There is hereby established in the department the Medi-Cal Dental Advisory Group. The duties of the advisory group shall include all of the following:

(1) Studying the structure, policies, and priorities of the state Medi-Cal dental fee-for-service program and the Medi-Cal dental managed care program with the goal of increasing the dental utilization rate among eligible child beneficiaries to 60 percent or greater, increasing the dental utilization rate among eligible adult beneficiaries, and improving the oral health of the Medi-Cal eligible population.

(2) Providing assistance and advice to the department, the Legislature, and the Governor regarding the Medi-Cal dental programs to ensure that the programs are based on sound clinical evidence and scientific evidence, and not merely on cost principles.

(3) Studying and evaluating how the Medi-Cal dental fee-for-service program and the Medi-Cal dental managed care program policies align with and support the implementation of the state oral health plan.

(b) The advisory group shall have knowledge and expertise in evidence-based dental practice and the scientific literature, and shall consist of the following members:

(1) The state dental director.

(2) Eight members appointed by the Governor that shall include the following:

(A) A representative from the California Dental Association.

(B) A representative from the California Dental Hygienists' Association.

(C) A representative of a philanthropic health care foundation.

(D) A representative of the California Society of Pediatric Dentistry.

(E) Two dental school educators who possess expertise in clinical dentistry, dental practice management, or the dental services field.

(F) A representative of a Medi-Cal dental managed care health plan organization.

(G) A representative of a community clinic or health center where dental services are provided.

(3) A maternal and child health advocate, appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules, with experience in the link between a mother's access to oral health care during pregnancy and postpartum and the child's improved access to oral health care.

(4) A consumer advocate, appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly, with experience in adult dental health.

(c) Before entering upon the discharge of his or her official duties, each member of the advisory group appointed pursuant to this section shall take and file an oath pursuant to Sections 1360 and 1363 of the Government Code.

(d) A member of the advisory group shall serve for a term of three years. There shall be no limit on the number of terms a member may serve. The terms of members may be staggered so that the terms of all members will not expire at the same time.

(e) A member of the advisory group shall not be compensated for his or her services, except that he or she shall be paid reasonable per diem and reimbursement of reasonable expenses for attending meetings and discharging other official responsibilities as authorized by the department and this section.

(f) The advisory group shall not take a position on legislation.

(g) (1) The advisory group shall report any of its findings to the Legislature, at least annually, and the department shall post those findings on its Internet Web site.

(2) A report submitted to the Legislature pursuant to paragraph (1) shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.

(h) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2023, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute that is enacted before January 1, 2023, deletes or extends that date.